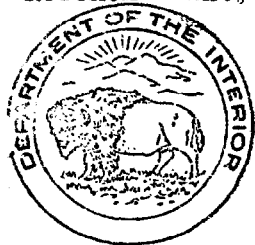


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FISHERY RESEARCH VESSEL TO STUDY NORTH CAROLINA'S OFFSHORE WATERS

A cooperative investigation of fishery resources in North Carolina's offshore waters will begin next week, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced today.

The study will be made by the Service and the University of North Carolina's Institute of Fisheries Research to determine possibilities of setting up otter trawl fisheries in the deeper waters off North Carolina's coast. It will be the first comprehensive survey made in this region to include studies of groundfish populations, plankton life and oceanographic conditions.

The investigation will be conducted by 14 scientists (including three from Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute) aboard the Albatross III, the Fish and Wildlife Service's 179-foot research vessel. During the course of the investigation, which is scheduled to end before June 30, the vessel will work from Morehead City, N. C.

There is not much offshore fishing in North Carolina because little is known of the kinds and abundance of fish in waters beyond the 20-fathom limit. The ocean-bottom conditions are also unknown, making trawling operations impractical. These factors prompted William A. Ellison, director of the University of North Carolina's Institute of Fisheries Research, to initiate the cooperative investigation.

The scientists aboard the Albatross III will seek deep areas where trawling is possible. They also hope to locate sizeable food fish populations to extend North Carolina's commercial offshore fishing operations.

Dr. William F. Royce, chief of the Fish and Wildlife Service's North Atlantic Fishery Investigations, headquartered at Woods Hole, Mass., will be in charge of the North Carolina survey. He will return to Woods Hole with the Albatross III in July, when the vessel will continue with its regular assignments: a census of fish populations on the New England banks; learning the effect of otter trawling on the ocean-bottom; improving fishing gear; and improving methods of handling and preserving fish. The vessel made its last research cruise from Woods Hole in January.

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